Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A method for determination of sharpness of a chopping unit including a chopping drum mounted for rotation in a bearing and carrying chopping blades which work against a counterblade mounted to a support, especially for the determination of the change in state of sharpness of the chopping blade between at least two points in time, comprising~~ A forage harvester with a chopping drum rotating about an axis and carrying a plurality of chopping blades, the forage harvester having means for feeding crop material across a counterblade mounted on a counterblade support and cooperating with the chopping blades to define a cutting gap and to cut the crop material into relatively short lengths as it passes across the gap, a sensor mounted at a protected location on one of the bottom of the counterblade and the rear of the counterblade and the counterblade support, the sensor operable to measure a parameter of oscillation of the counterblade, the sensor connected to a processing device which is operable to perform the steps of:

a. making at least two measurements of the ~~a characteristic~~ parameter of ~~an operating~~ oscillation induced in ~~one of~~ said ~~chopping blade and~~ counterblade;

b. comparing integrals ~~determining a ratio of fractions~~ of said parameter of oscillation at least two frequency bands of the measured signal or its maximum value ~~peak~~ for each of said two measurements, and;

c. evaluating a change ~~in said ratio~~ between said two measurements.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The method~~ A forage harvester, as defined in claim 1, wherein:

a. a first of said at least two measurements is made when said chopping blades are sharp and is followed by an analysis ~~of the fractions~~ of at least two frequency regions of the measured signal;

b. a second of said at least two measurements is made after a pre-selected interval determined by one of duration or revolutions of the chopping drum, that is greater than ~~or equal to~~ zero, and measurement

analysis ~~of the fractions~~ of the same frequency regions as are in step (2a) of said measurement signal; ~~and~~

c. determining a reference value from analysis of said results of steps (2a) and (2b) by one of, forming a difference or a quotient, or by using a weighting function on the second measurement, recovered from the first measurement;

d. comparing said reference value determined in step (2c) with a selectable ~~stipulated~~ threshold value of deviation, with a return to step (2b) when this ~~stipulated~~ threshold value of deviation is fallen short of; and

e. triggering an event responsive to the comparison made in step (2d) when the ~~stipulated~~ threshold value of deviation is equaled or exceeded.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The method~~ A forage harvester as defined in claim 1 wherein ~~said~~ an analysis of said ~~characteristic~~ parameter of oscillation according to steps 1a through 1c occurs in the time or frequency region.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~The method~~ A forage harvester as defined in claim 1 wherein said ~~characteristic~~ parameter of oscillation is an acceleration, an elongation or an acoustic pressure.

5. (Cancelled)